

Message Text

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ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 ICAE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-02

SP-02 SS-15 HA-05 /055 W

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O 171515Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 940

UNCLAS KINSHASA 7781

FOR INR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UR CG SOPN PINR

SUBJ: PUBLIC REACTION TO SOVIET TRIALS

REF: STATE 178559

1. THERE HAVE BEEN NO PUBLIC OR PRIVATE HOST GOVT REACTIONS TO OFFICIAL US GOVT STATEMENTS ON SOVIET DISSIDENT TRIALS NOR TO THE TRIALS THEMSELVES.

2. THE ZAIRIAN PRESS AGENCY (AZAP) AND LOCAL DAILY NEWSPAPER "ELIMA" PRINTED ON JULY 15 AN ARTICLE DESCRIBING THE DISSIDENT TRIALS. TEXT FOLLOWS:

BEGIN TEXT: "DESPITE INTERNATIONAL PROTESTS, SOVIET JUSTICE HAS DECIDED TO HIT DISSIDENTS HARD. THE HISTORIAN AND WRITER ALEXANDER GINZBURG, 42 YEARS OLD, ON TRIAL FOR 'PROPOGANDA AND ANTI-SOVIET ACTIVITY,' WAS CONDEMNED TO 8 YEARS OF HARD LABOR BY THE COURT OF KALOUGA, 180KM SOUTHWEST OF MOSCOW.

"FATHER OF TWO CHILDREN, 5 AND 3 YEARS OLD, HE HAS ALREADY SPENT SEVEN YEARS OF HIS LIFE IN PRISON AND THOSE CLOSE TO HIM ARE AFRAID HE WILL NOT SURVIVE THIS NEW SENTENCE.

"ALSO ON THURSDAY, AT VILNIUS IN LITHUANIA, THE LITHUANIAN WRITER AND TRANSLATOR VICTORAS PIATKUS, 49 YEARS OLD, WITH SIXTEEN UNCLASSIFIED

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YEARS OF PRISON ALREADY BEHIND HIM, ACCUSED OF ANTI-SOVIET ACTIVITY, WAS CONDEMNED TO TEN YEARS IN CAPTIVITY, THREE IN PRISON AND SEVEN IN FORCED LABOR CAMP. MR. PIATKUS, MEMBER OF THE LITHUANIAN GROUP MONITORING THE HELSINKI ACCORD, WILL BE ASSIGNED TO HOUSE ARREST FOR FIVE YEARS AFTER THE COMPLETION OF HIS SENTENCE.

"IN MOSCOW, THE TRIAL FOR ESPIONAGE AND TREASON AGAINST THE JEWISH ENGINEER ANATOLY CHTCHANRANSKY, 30 YEARS OLD, HAS ENDED.

IN HIS PLEAS, THE PROSECUTOR ASKED FOR A SENTENCE OF FIFTEEN YEARS,
THREE IN PRISON AND TWELVE AT FORCED LABOR.

"CHTCHANRANSKY'S CHARGES COULD HAVE MEANT A DEATH SENTENCE.
HIS MOTHER, 72 YEARS OLD, WHO HAS NOT SEEN HER SON FOR 18 MONTHS,
WAITED OUTSIDE THE HALL TO WHICH SHE WAS NOT ADMITTED UNTIL HER
SON WAS SENTENCED.

"MIGHT THIS ONLY BE THE FIRST WAVE? MANY PEOPLE THINK SO
BECAUSE MOSCOW SEEMS VERY WILLING TO SMASH DISSENT. HOWEVER, PROTEST
ONLY INCREASES WITH POLICE HARRASSMENT, REPRESSION, JAIL SENTENCES,
DPRIVAL OF CITIZENSHIP, ACCORDING TO OBSERVERS IN MOSCOW. THE
PROSECUTOR WHO ASKED FOR 8 YEARS OF PRISON FOLLOWED BY THREE
YEARS OF HOUSE ARREST CHARACTERIZED HIS PLEA AS 'MERCIFUL' BASED ON
THE FACT THAT MR. GINZBURG HAD TWO YOUNG CHILDREN.

"MEMBER OF THE MOSCOW GROUP MONITORING THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT,
THE CONDEMNED MAN ADMINISTERED BEFORE HIS ARREST THE SPECIAL FUND TO
AID POLITICAL PRISONERS CREATED BY THE WRITER ALEXANDER SOLJENITSYNE
AND THE PHYSICIST ANDREI SAKHAROV, WINNER OF THE NOBEL PEACE
PRIZE." END TEXT.
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NNN

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